

Over the last few months, an outbreak of H1N1 (also known as Swine Flu) has spread to across the United States and to hundreds of countries around the globe. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has reported thousands of confirmed cases across the United States, including many in New York State. Fortunately, nearly all of these have been successfully treated.

At this point, information about the origin, nature and treatment of H1N1 is still being pursued. However, it is clear that **this virus is not contracted through contact with or consumption of pork products**. Rather, like other influenza viruses, H1N1 is contracted by coming into contact with an infected person. As transmission occurs between individuals, there are a number of steps that you can take to protect yourself against contracting H1N1:

Receive a vaccine: Hundreds of clinics and hospitals across New York State are distributing H1N1 vaccine. However, supplies of this vaccine are currently limited and many medical facilities reserve the right to restrict distribution to only the most at-risk individuals aged 6 months to 24 years of age, pregnant women, and people aged 25 to 64 years of age with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease. For additional information on facilities distributing H1N1 vaccine, visit [New York State's H1N1page](#).

If you feel well: Healthy residents living in areas where cases are being confirmed should take everyday preventive actions (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>). These are especially important as there is no vaccine available for swine flu at this time.

If you are ill: Individuals who are sick with influenza-like illness (fever and one or two of the following: cough, sore throat, runny nose) are reminded to take standard measures to limit spread of disease such as frequent hand washing, covering their cough and avoiding going to work, school or other settings where they could infect others (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>). Individuals should consult with their primary medical provider if their symptoms are not being managed effectively with over-the-counter medications or if they have other medical conditions such as pregnancy or chronic illness. If you become ill within seven (7) days of having traveled to Mexico, or locations in the United States and Canada where confirmed cases have occurred, you should take all of the above measures and consult with your primary care physician to determine if you need testing or treatment.

If you become ill at work: As is generally recommended, individuals who note the onset of influenza-like illness while at work should take measures to prevent the spread of disease such as leaving work in order to limit the potential exposure to others, cover their coughs and reinforce hand hygiene. If you have questions as to the nature of your symptoms please contact your physician. Listed below are links to the CDC with general precautions and advisories regarding the current H1N1 situation.

[Summary of H1N1 Investigation and Recommendations](#)

[General Information About H1N1](#)

[World Health Organization H1N1 Site](#)